

First of all, we would like to reiterate the critical message that the charge of the study committee should be:

How to expand UPK to **ensure** best child outcomes – including all options for expansion – **AND** an implementation plan to move 4-year olds into public schools.

Second, and most importantly at this time under the current circumstances, at the very least this committee should advocate for full FTE weight for students in preschool programs in public schools where schools are now or will be providing full school day programming. This is a huge equity issue and by not addressing this we are providing a disservice to many of our poorer communities and school districts; many of which do not have any viable options for out-of-school child care. This also doesn't impact the education fund but does provide marginal relief for school districts that are already serving these students who are often in economically depressed regions of our state and who are often marginalized populations.

Given the aforementioned, we believe that the study language is way too broad. We have heard testimony from the Agency of Education who has pretty clearly indicated that they don't have a lot of capacity to provide much technical support. Our organizations do not feel that Building Bright Futures should be the convenor as their focus seems to be (from our collective perspective) more on the outside of public schools and focused more on private providers. Having them at the table to share their expertise certainly makes sense. We suggest that the Agency of Education be the convenor and more specifically that the process be directed by the Universal PreKindergarten Programmer at the Agency of Education - presumably this individual

will have an understanding of early childhood and would be focused on what is best for students first and foremost. Additionally, this person should have a good understanding of the working dynamics between private and public school early childhood programs.

In terms of the makeup of the committee, we strongly believe that at least 2 principals and/or early childhood teachers that already have programs in their schools serving full day 4 year olds be part of the committee along with the litany described in version 2.1 of the testimony.